

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 OPIC-03 AID-05

IGA-02 SS-15 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PC-01

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P 152335Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9423

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MANAGUA 1230

FOR WEISSMAN (ARA-CEN) FROM AMBASSADOR THEBERGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XM, NU

SUBJECT: CASP REPORT: AMBASSADOR'S OVERVIEW

REF: MANAGUA A-13 AND A-16

1. THE CASP REPORT WAS POUCHED ON MARCH 9 AND SHOULD BE ARRIVING SOON. MY OVERVIEW WAS NOT INCLUDED AND THE SIGNED TEXT IS BEING POUCHED TOMORROW (MARCH 16).

2. MEANWHILE, YOU MAY WISH TO HAVE THE OVERVIEW AVAILABLE FOR EXAMINATION BEFORE THE POUCH ARRIVES. THEREFORE, I AM TRANSMITTING THE TEXT HERewith: CASP: AMBASSADOR'S OVERVIEW.

1. THE FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OF U.S. POLICY IN NICARAGUA IS TO MANAGE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS SO AS TO INSURE THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, AND ITS SUCCESSORS, MAINTAINS FRIENDLY, COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE MISSION- STATE, AID, USIA, MILGP, PEACE CORPS, IAGS--ARE MAKING USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE PURSUIT OF THIS OBJECTIVE. NO SIGNIFI- CANT POLICY CHANGES ARE RECOMMENDED AT THIS TIME, AND THE CURRENT MODERATE LEVEL OF THE AID AND MILGP PROGRAMS SHOULD BE CONTINUED.

2. THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SYSTZMS WITHIN WHICH U.S. BILATERAL

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RELATIONS WITH NICARAGUA ARE CONDUCTED HAVE ENTERED A PERIOD OF

PROFOUND ADJUSTMENT WHICH MAY HAVE ADVERSE LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS ON U.S.-NICARAGUAN RELATIONS AND U.S. INTERESTS IN LATIN AMERICA MORE GENERALLY. IN THE 1970'S SOME COUNTRIES IN THE IMMEDIATE CARIBBEAN AREA HAVE MOVED TOWARDS NEUTRALISM IN THE EAST-WEST STRUGGLE, SO-CALLED THIRD WORLD NONALIGNMENT (I.E., ANTI-WEST ALIGNMENT) AND POSITIONS OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE US AS A CONSEQUENCE OF REAL AND IMAGINED GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE US, WIDE-SPREAD PERCEPTION OF RISING THIRD WORLD AND SOVIET BLOC POWER AND INFLUENCE, AND A SENSE OF US RETRENCHMENT AND WITHDRAWAL IN THE POST-VIETNAM PERIOD. MORE RECENTLY, THE INABILITY OF THE U.S. TO REACT TO CUBA'S SOVIET-SUPPORTED COMBAT INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA HAS FURTHER CONTRIBUTED TO THE SHIFT IN LOCAL PERCEPTIONS. THERE IS A STRONG SENSE OF ANXIETY IN GOV. CIRCLES THAT U.S. COMMITMENT TO HEMISPHERIC COLLECTIVE SECURITY, AND MORE PARTICULARLY NICARAGUA'S SECURITY, MAY BE LESS RELIABLE OR FIRM THAN BEFORE.

3. SMALL, WEAK COUNTRIES LIKE NICARAGUA ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO PERCEIVED GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SHIFTS IN POWER BALANCES, AND PARTICULARLY ANY DECLINE IN THE POSITION OF THE U.S.. THE PRINCIPAL ALLY AND PROTECTOR. POLITICAL AND MILITARY VULNERABILITY MAKE IT IMPERATIVE FOR NICARAGUAN POLICY TO ACCOMMODATE TO THESE PERCEIVED CHANGES AT THE SAME TIME. THE EMERGENCE OF A MORE COMPLEX WORLD OF NEW GLOBAL AND REGIONAL POWER BLOCS AND ALIGNMENTS OFFERS A BROADER SET OF OPTIONS FOR THE STRUCTURING OF ITS EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND PURSUING ITS DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY OBJECTIVES. ARMS, TRAINING, CAPITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND AID ARE NOW AVAILABLE NOT JUST FROM THE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA, RUSSIA AND JAPAN, BUT INCREASINGLY FROM THE THIRD WORLD.

4. THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF SUCCESSIVE SHIFTS OF INDIVIDUALLY WEAK AND STRATEGICALLY UNIMPORTANT COUNTRIES TOWARDS POSITIONS THAT ARE COOLER, AND LESS COOPERATIVE TO US AND MORE RECEPTIVE TO ALIGNMENTS WITH OUR ADVERSARIES CAN INELUCTABLY TILT THE REGIONAL BALANCE AGAINST THE U.S. OTHER NATIONS, EVEN TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY ONES LIKE NICARAGUA, WILL BE COMPELLED TO ACCOMMODATE THEIR POLICIES, TO GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE, TO WHAT IS PERCEIVED AS THE DOMINANT POLITICAL TREND. AS A CONSEQUENCE OF ITS ESPECIALLY STRONG POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TIES WITH THE U.S., NICARAGUA IS LESS LIKELY THAN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES

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TO DRIFT INTO AN OPENLY ANTAGONISTIC POSTURE. NEVERTHELESS, EVEN SMALL SHIFTS IN NICARAGUA'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE U.S., BECAUSE OF ITS STRONG IDENTIFICATION WITH US, WOULD LIKELY BE DISCERNED BEYOND ITS BORDERS AS EVIDENCE OF A FURTHER WEAKENING OF US INFLUENCE.

5. THE EXTENT TO WHICH US POLICY OF PENALTIES FOR ADVENTURISM AND CONFRONTATION AND INCENTIVES FOR RESTRAINT AND COOPERATION

IS SUCCESSFULLY PURSUED AT THE GLOBAL AND HEMISPHERIC LEVELS
MAY PROVE TO BE THE MOST POTENT FACTOR IN ACHIEVING OUR
FUNDAMENTAL BILATERAL OBJECTIVE. BUT THE EFFORT CANNOT BE SUCCESSFUL
UNLESS WE ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT EVEN IN NICARAGUA FRIENDSHIP
AND COOPERATION CANNOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED, BUT MUST BE PROMOTED
IN A FLEXIBLE AND INTELLIGENT MANNER WITH ALL INSTRUMENTS AT OUR
DISPOSAL.

6. US BILATERAL PROGRAMS OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY COOPERATION ARE
OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN MAINTAINING COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH
NICARAGUA. THEY PROVIDE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF US SUPPORT FOR
NICARAGUA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY, PRIMARY
POLICY CONCERNS OF ANY DEVELOPING COUNTRY. IN SMALL, DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES LIKE NICARAGUA EVEN MODEST BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS
SERVE AS A POSITIVE INCITEMENT TO COOPERATION AND SHOULD BE
RETAINED.

7. THE AID PROGRAM DEMONSTRATES OUR INTEREST IN THE WELFARE OF
THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE, ITS HUMANITARIAN ORIENTATION HELPS TO
CREATE A FAVORABLE LOCAL IMAGE IN OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL CIRCLES,
AND IT PROVIDES AN INCENTIVE TO THE GON TO DEDICATE RESOURCES
TO IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF THE POOREST SECTORS OF NICARAGUAN
SOCIETY. THE INVIERNO CAMPESINO DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IS ESPECIALLY
SIGNIFICANT IN THIS CONTEXT, AND IS BEING CLOSELY MONITORED TO
ENSURE THAT IT CONTRIBUTES IN FULL MEASURE TO THESE AIMS.

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9424

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8. THE MILGP PROGRAM ASSURES THE GON AND THE NATIONAL GUARD OF

OUR INTEREST IN NICARAGUA'S SECURITY IN A WAY THAT WORDS CANNOT DO. ARMS SALES, TRAINING AID, AND MILGP PRESENCE PROVIDE US WITH UNIQUE INFLUENCE AND ACCESS AND HAVE A STABILIZING EFFECT IN THE REGION. PRECIPITATE OR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF THESE KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIP IS NOT IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST. SUCH ACTIONS WOULD RAISE FURTHER DOUBTS ABOUT THE US WILL AND ABILITY TO PROTECT ITS ALLIES.

9. LOOKING AHEAD, PRIORITY IMPORTANCE IS ATTACHED TO MAINTAINING A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH MODERATE OPPOSITION FORCES AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMAGE AND REALITY OF A MORE EVEN-HANDED AND NEUTRAL APPROACH AS BETWEEN CONTENDING POLITICAL FORCES. IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE ACCESS AND INFLUENCE WITH ALL POTENTIAL POLITICAL SUCCESSORS. MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE GON AND A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS US ON THE PART OF THE NON-MARXIST OPPOSITION FORCES WILL REQUIRE CONTINUED EMBASSY EFFORTS DURING THE CASP PERIOD.

10. THE PRO-CASTRO FSLN IS CAPABLE OF ISOLATED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE BUT FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE IS TOO WEAK TO MOUNT A SERIOUS, SUSTAINED TERRORIST CAMPAIGN. WE ARE ALERT, HOWEVER, TO THE POSSIBLE LONG-TERM POTENTIAL OF SUCH MOVEMENTS ARISING FROM THE ABSENCE OF A STRONG, MODERATE ANTI-SOMOZA OPPOSITION. THUS, THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE TO THE GON THE NEED TO DEVELOP FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF A
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VIAABLE, MODERATE OPPOSITION.

11. THERE IS NO EVIDENT PATTERN OF GROSS, SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN NICARAGUA, BUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION APPARENTLY WORSENEED SOMEWHAT DURING THE LAST YEAR. THIS LESS FAVORABLE SITUATION MAY BE REVERSED, HOWEVER, DURING THE CASP PERIOD WITH THE DECLINE IN THE FSLN THREAT AND THE ENDING OF THE MILITARY TRIALS. THE U.S. CANNOT AND DOES NOT CONDONE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE OUR CONCERN KNOWN TO THE GON AS APPROPRIATE AND ENCOURAGE THE LIFTING OF STATE OF SIEGE AND CENSORSHIP.

12. NICARAGUA'S UNUSUALLY CONSISTENT, LOYAL SUPPORT OF THE US IN WORLD AND REGIONAL COUNCILS IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT BENEFIT WE GAIN THROUGH OUR PRESENT SET OF RELATIONS. THIS SUPPORT SHOULD CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE CASP PERIOD AS LONG AS WE REMAIN ALERT TO EMERGING PRESSURES AND INFLUENCES AND ARE ABLE TO MOVE QUICKLY TO COUNTER THEM THROUGH OUR BILATERAL AND GLOBAL POLICIES. MOREOVER, I BELIEVE THAT THE GOODWILL THAT WE CURRENTLY ENJOY IN CENTRAL AMERICA COULD BE BETTER EXPLOITED TO OUR ADVANTAGE BY MORE TIMELY AND BETTER COORDINATED APPROACHES TO THE FIVE COUNTRIES ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO US, AND MORE SKILLFUL EFFORTS TO MOBILIZE NATIONAL LEADERS TO PROMOTE OUR

CONCEPTS AMONGST THE OTHERS.

13. I BELIEVE THAT THE LEVEL OF PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES DEVOTED TO THE AID AND MILGP PROGRAMS ARE REASONABLY CONSISTENT WITH OUR OBJECTIVES, ALTHOUGH SOME SCALING DOWN OF AID AND MILGP PERSONNEL, AS PROJECTED, SHOULD BE POSSIBLE OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS WITHOUT ADVERSELY AFFECTING OUR RELATIONS.
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